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International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, 2017

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report was prepared in accordance with General Assembly resolution 70/193 on the proclamation of 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development. The report contains a summary of the major activities and initiatives carried out by the World Tourism Organization in conjunction with other actors and highlights key activities and initiatives undertaken by Governments, international organizations, the private sector and other stakeholders within the context of the International Year. In the concluding section of the report, an assessment is provided of the results achieved, and actions and recommendations are set out with regard to sustaining and capitalizing on the significant momentum generated by the International Year.

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I. Background

1. The General Assembly proclaimed 2017 the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development in its resolution 70/193, in which it invited the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) to facilitate the organization and implementation of the International Year, in collaboration with Governments, relevant organizations of the United Nations system, international and regional organizations and other relevant stakeholders, and requested the organization to inform the Assembly at its seventy-third session on the implementation of the resolution.

2. At its twenty-first session, the UNWTO General Assembly adopted resolution A/RES/653 (XXI) in which it welcomed with appreciation the efforts of the UNWTO secretariat to achieve the adoption of the United Nations General Assembly resolution on proclaiming 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, and acknowledged with appreciation the efforts of Austria, Colombia, Egypt, Indonesia, Morocco, the Republic of Korea and Rwanda, at the initiative of Samoa, in taking up the endeavour at the United Nations General Assembly.

3. The designation of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development came 50 years after the International Tourist Year was proclaimed in 1967, under the slogan "Tourism — passport to peace", and 15 years after the International Year of Ecotourism in 2002. Furthermore, the adoption of resolution 70/193 in 2015 coincided with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Tourism is included in targets under three of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals: Goal 8, on sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all; Goal 12, on sustainable consumption and production; and Goal 14, on the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources. Yet, given its cross-cutting nature and immense value chain, tourism has the potential to directly or indirectly contribute to all 17 Goals.

4. The proclamation of the International Year reflects the important role of sustainable tourism in the achievement of the Goals. Moreover, tourism fosters better understanding among people, leading to a greater awareness of the rich heritage of civilizations and bringing about a better appreciation of the inherent value of different cultures, thereby contributing to strengthened global peace.

5. Within this context, the central aim of the International Year was to raise awareness among decision makers and the public of the contribution of tourism to sustainable development while mobilizing all stakeholders to work together and make tourism a catalyst for positive change. The Year also represented an unparalleled opportunity to foster necessary changes in policies, business practices and consumer behaviour, progressing towards a more sustainable tourism sector worldwide.

II. Plan for the observance of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, 2017

6. Pursuant to the request of the UNWTO General Assembly, an International Year Steering Committee was established, composed of UNWTO member States and affiliate members, representatives from academia, global tourism associations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other stakeholders. The Steering Committee served as the focal point for coordinating the preparation, implementation and promotion of the Year's activities. In addition, an internal working group, created at the UNWTO secretariat and consisting of regional and operational departments, worked on the implementation of the Year.

7. A road map for the observance of the International Year was developed in collaboration with the Steering Committee and served as a guiding document and as a communication tool to disseminate information about the objectives, lines of action (namely, advocacy and awareness-raising, knowledge-sharing, and policy-making and capacity-building), potential activities and a partnership scheme among stakeholders and potential sponsors and partners.

8. A thematic framework was designed to explore and highlight the role of tourism in five key areas of sustainable development: (a) inclusive and sustainable economic growth; (b) social inclusiveness, employment and poverty reduction; (c) resource efficiency, environmental protection and climate change; (d) cultural values, diversity and heritage; and (e) mutual understanding, peace and security.

9. The logo for the International Year was selected out of 115 proposals submitted through a worldwide competition held in 2016. The winning logo featured a dandelion that represented Earth as a planet where people, represented by seeds, travelled in a sustainable and responsible way.

10. The International Year website (www.tourism4development2017.org), available in English, French and Spanish, provided a collaborative platform for all stakeholders to share their International Year-related initiatives, research and stories, thereby stimulating knowledge-sharing and engagement. Over 1,000 activities and initiatives were registered, including 660 events that were uploaded to a digital map of celebrations and 300 solutions, 65 stories and 70 publications and articles related to sustainable tourism that were shared on the platform. The website also contained a set of resources, including social media and other audiovisual materials, such as the official International Year logo and the consumer-oriented International Year campaign, "Travel.Enjoy.Respect". All of these resources were made available to stakeholders following an official request to and subsequent authorization by UNWTO.

11. The International Year was financed entirely by extrabudgetary resources raised through a partnership scheme. In total, 65 sponsors and partners and 15 "Travel.Enjoy.Respect" campaign supporters made around €1.8 million in financial and in-kind contributions, enabling UNWTO to implement a range of activities and initiatives related to the Year. More than 50 per cent of the voluntary contributions came from private sector stakeholders, and the remainder came from, inter alia, public institutions, NGOs and academia. Most of the sponsors and partners came from Europe, contributing about 40 per cent of the funds, followed by Asia and the Pacific, the Americas, Africa and the Middle East.

III. Activities and initiatives organized by the World Tourism Organization and member States

A. Official events of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, 2017

12. Fourteen official events were held around the world with more than 5,600 participants, representing a multitude of stakeholders who gathered to discuss topics such as inclusive growth and employment, tourism measurement, tourism and culture, urban tourism, and tourism and technology.

13. In the framework of the official events, five declarations for the future development of tourism were adopted with a special focus on using tourism to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals: (a) the Manila call for action on measuring sustainable tourism; (b) the Chengdu declaration on tourism and the Sustainable

Development Goals; (c) the Montego Bay declaration on jobs and inclusive growth: partnerships for sustainable tourism; (d) the Lusaka declaration on promoting sustainable tourism, a tool for inclusive growth and community engagement in Africa; and (e) the Muscat declaration on tourism and culture: fostering sustainable development.

14. The opening ceremony of the International Year was held on 18 January 2017 at the International Tourism Fair in Madrid, where the UNWTO secretariat is headquartered. More than 600 participants attended the event, including the Prime Minister of Georgia, the Vice-President of Honduras and over 40 tourism ministers. It included a special reception hosted by the King of Spain, Felipe VI, for tourism dignitaries and marked the launch of the "Travel.Enjoy.Respect" campaign.

15. All UNWTO regional commission meetings included events dedicated to the International Year:

(a) At the fifty-ninth meeting of the UNWTO Regional Commission for Africa (18–21 April 2017), 21 tourism ministers from across the continent attended an interactive session on the International Year;

(b) At the meeting of the UNWTO Regional Commission for the Middle East (24 April 2017), the UNWTO and Arabian Travel Market Ministerial Forum discussed tourism's contribution to sustainable and inclusive economic growth and diversification in the Middle East and North Africa Region;

(c) At the twenty-ninth joint meeting of the UNWTO Regional Commission for East Asia and the Pacific and the UNWTO Regional Commission for South Asia, held in Bangladesh (15–17 May 2017), participants reviewed activities being carried out at the national level to celebrate the International Year;

(d) At the sixty-first meeting of the UNWTO Regional Commission for the Americas (29 May–1 June 2017), UNWTO, the Ministry of Tourism of El Salvador and the Honduran Institute of Tourism organized an international seminar on the theme "New technologies applied to tourism";

(e) The sixty-first meeting of the UNWTO Regional Commission for Europe (6 and 7 June 2017) involved an event showcasing International Year initiatives developed in several European member States, as well as a tree planting ceremony.

16. On the occasion of the one hundred fifth session of the UNWTO Executive Council, held in Madrid from 10 to 12 May 2017, a round table on the theme "Sustainable urban tourism" was organized by UNWTO, the Spanish Ministry of Energy, Tourism and the Digital Agenda, and the City Council of Madrid. Tourism ministers and international representatives participated in the round table, which enabled the exchange of experiences in urban tourism management.

17. Nearly 1,000 experts from over 80 countries convened at the sixth International Conference on Tourism Statistics, held in Manila from 21 to 24 June 2017, to lay the groundwork for an expanded statistical framework to measure sustainable tourism in its economic, social and environmental dimensions. The outcome of the event, the Manila call for action on measuring sustainable tourism, represented a global commitment to sustainable tourism and the need to measure tourism through a consistent statistical approach, recognizing that effective sustainable tourism policies require an integrated, coherent and robust information base.

18. The twenty-second session of the UNWTO General Assembly, held in Chengdu, China, from 11 to 16 September 2017, featured an International Year event at which numerous delegations of UNWTO affiliate members and member States gathered, with the latter sharing views on the inclusion of tourism in national strategies for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals during a high-level panel.

A key achievement of the session was the approval of the Chengdu declaration on tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals and of the UNWTO Framework Convention on Tourism Ethics.

19. The international conference on the theme "Promoting sustainable tourism: a tool for inclusive growth and community engagement in Africa", held in Lusaka from 16 to 18 November 2017, was a flagship International Year event organized in cooperation with the Government of Zambia. African tourism leaders addressed the potential of tourism to alleviate poverty and called for transformative change through the revision of strategies for and approaches to the development of sustainable tourism initiatives in Africa. In addition, the South Luangwa National Park was recognized as the world's first sustainable wildlife park. The conference concluded with the adoption of the Lusaka Declaration on promoting sustainable tourism, a tool for inclusive growth and community engagement in Africa.

20. The global conference on the theme "Jobs and inclusive growth: partnerships for sustainable tourism", held in Montego Bay, Jamaica, from 27 to 29 November 2017 and organized by UNWTO, the Government of Jamaica, the World Bank Group and the Inter-American Development Bank, was attended by 1,500 participants and featured over 150 speakers. The event was aimed at designing and coordinating an international roadmap that would foster collaborative relationships for inclusive economic and social development through tourism. During the conference, successful public-private partnership models and initiatives were identified and practical plans were established for future development initiatives contributing to sustainable tourism development and building on the International Year. The conference concluded with the adoption of the Montego Bay declaration on jobs and inclusive growth: partnerships for sustainable tourism.

21. The second UNWTO/United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization World Conference on the theme "Tourism and culture: fostering sustainable development" was held in Muscat on 11 and 12 December 2017. Over 800 global leaders and stakeholders in the sectors of tourism and culture from 70 countries gathered to build and strengthen partnerships between these sectors while moving to enhance their contribution to the 2030 Agenda. The conference concluded with the adoption of the Muscat declaration on tourism and culture: fostering sustainable development.

22. The closing ceremony of the International Year was held on 19 December 2017 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva and was attended by more than 200 participants from around the world. The event included a review of the main achievements of the International Year and a discussion of the road map for advancing the contribution of tourism to the 2030 Agenda in the future. On this occasion, the joint UNWTO/United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) publication entitled *Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals: Journey to 2030* was presented.

23. Other significant events in the framework of the International Year included an international conference on the theme "Decent work and socially responsible tourism", organized by UNWTO and the International Labour Organization (ILO) and held in Madrid on 20 October 2017, at which the present situation and challenges of the labour market in the tourism sector were discussed; and a session on the theme "The Power of youth: making a difference through sustainable tourism", organized by UNWTO, Hilton and the World Youth Student and Education Travel Confederation and held during the Youth Assembly at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 11 August 2017, in honour of International Youth Day. In addition, the world conference on the theme "Tourism and future energy: unlocking low-carbon growth opportunities", held in Astana on 26 and 27 June 2017 and organized by UNWTO, Expo 2017 Astana and the Ministry of Tourism of Kazakhstan, was aimed at

advancing the commitment of the tourism sector to the global climate change agenda. As an outcome of the conference, a set of recommendations was adopted and a report was launched, entitled *World Conference on Tourism and Future Energy: Unlocking Low-Carbon Growth Opportunities — EXPO 2017, Astana, Kazakhstan, 26–27 June 2017*.

B. Awareness-raising and capacity-building initiatives

24. A special ambassadors programme for the International Year was established to enhance advocacy and awareness-raising for tourism as a tool for development and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. The special ambassadors engaged in several of the official International Year events and promoted the Year through keynote speeches, video messages and interviews. Each special ambassador had a specific role according to his or her field of expertise. The programme comprised 12 special ambassadors, namely: the former President of Colombia, Juan Manuel Santos Calderón; the former President of Costa Rica, Luis Guillermo Solís Rivera; the former President of Liberia, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf; the President of Malta, Marie Louise Coleiro Preca; the Prime Minister of Samoa, Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi; King of Bulgaria, Simeon II; the First Lady of Iceland, Eliza Jean Reid; the President of the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities, Shaikha Mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa; the Chair of China UnionPay, Huayong Ge; the President of the Federal Association of the German Tourism Industry, Michael Frenzel; the Chair of Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organization, Talal Abu-Ghazaleh; and Hello Kitty.

25. The "Travel.Enjoy.Respect" campaign, the first-ever traveller-oriented campaign by UNWTO, was aimed at raising awareness of the capacity of travellers to promote positive change. It included a video, a set of tips developed by the World Committee on Tourism Ethics to encourage responsible travel, a consumer-facing microsite and other materials in 11 languages. Three main actions were taken: (a) awareness-raising/advertising through partnerships; (b) an Instagram photo contest that culminated on World Tourism Day (27 September 2017); and (c) a travellers' competition that garnered a total of 2,400 submissions. The winner of the competition travelled the regions of the world, promoting sustainable travel and sharing experiences on the campaign website. In addition, two weeks prior to the International Year closing ceremony held in December, an exhibition was organized at the Palais des Nations in Geneva to promote the links between tourism and the Goals and to promote the campaign.

26. The campaign engaged 15 global supporters who made in-kind contributions totalling more than €500,000 and ensured visibility through, for instance, showing the campaign on airplanes (All Nippon Airways, Iberia, Air France-KLM), trains (Renfe), media channels (CNN) and in airports (Chengdu Shuangliu International Airport, China, and Narita International Airport, Japan). Furthermore, over 70 Governments and private sector and civil society stakeholders uploaded the video to their websites and social media channels and used it during events related to the International Year.

27. The UNWTO Silk Road Programme, in cooperation with the UNWTO Themis Foundation and the University of Valencia, Spain, ran the UNWTO Silk Road Training and Capacity-building Programme as an official International Year activity in Madrid and Valencia, Spain in October and November 2017. The purpose of the project was to develop technical expertise and raise capacity-building standards among Silk Road member States by training national tourism officials and university graduates in areas such as national and transnational cooperation, destination management and tourism route development.

C. Knowledge-sharing

28. Three publications were produced in the context of the International Year, including two flagship publications:

(a) *Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals: Journey to 2030* is a UNWTO/UNDP publication aimed at inspiring Governments, policymakers and tourism businesses to incorporate relevant aspects of the Sustainable Development Goals into policy and financing frameworks as well as business operations;

(b) *Tourism for Development* is a UNWTO flagship report of which volume I is on key areas for action and volume II is on good practices. The publication addresses the changes required in policies, business practices and consumer behaviour if tourism is to effectively contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in each of the five key areas of the International Year. Initially a discussion paper, the report evolved into a full publication through a global consultation process that was conducted in 2017 and led to the incorporation of country examples, case studies and critical comments provided by Governments, organizations and society;

(c) *Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals: Good Practices in the Americas* is a publication that was jointly prepared by UNWTO and the Organization of American States. It includes case studies from across the Americas on the contributions of tourism to Goal implementation strategies.

29. With the support of International Year funds, two additional publications are to be developed in 2018 and 2019 to address specific key areas of the International Year. The second edition of the *Global Report on Women in Tourism* (UNWTO and United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)) will be published in partnership with UN-Women, the World Bank, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit and Amadeus in the first quarter of 2019, and a publication on global CO_2 emissions from tourism, including transport, will be released jointly by UNWTO and the International Transport Forum at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in the fourth quarter of 2018.

IV. Activities and initiatives by stakeholders

30. UNWTO registered close to 1,800 International Year activities and initiatives in 170 countries through the International Year website, surveys on the International Year and online research. The activities and initiatives developed by Governments, international organizations, United Nations entities, NGOs, the private sector and other stakeholders are set out below, providing a snapshot of how the International Year was celebrated around the world. Figures I, II and III show the geographical distribution of activities by UNWTO region, type of activity and type of institution, respectively.

Figure I
Geographical distribution of activities by World Tourism Organization region

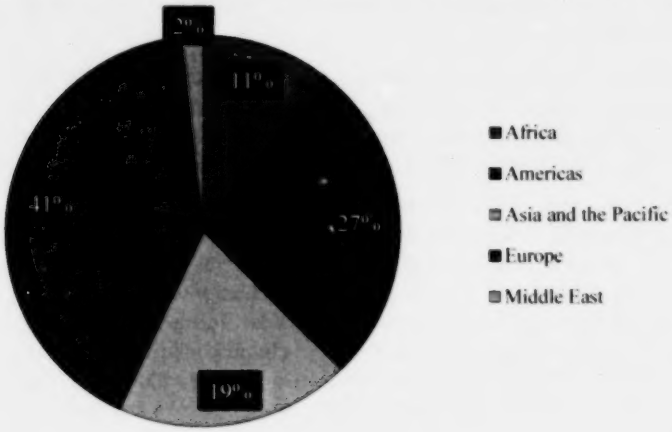
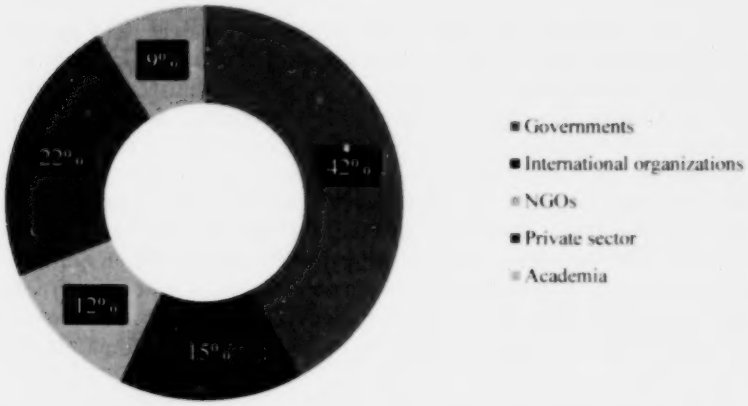


Figure II
Distribution by type of activity

Figure III
Distribution by type of institution



A. Activities and initiatives of Governments

31. A survey among States Members of the United Nations and additional research carried out by UNWTO demonstrated a high level of involvement in the activities to celebrate the International Year. Many Governments defined a strategy or action plan for the implementation of the International Year or set up a national International Year committee or working group to coordinate activities. The committees included representatives from ministries and other public entities, private entities, NGOs, civil society and local communities, among other stakeholders. Some countries without national International Year committees developed other mechanisms to undertake activities in 2017, such as holding meetings within pre-existing working groups and consultations with tourism stakeholders, as well as disseminating information about the International Year.

32. Close to 850 government activities and initiatives were registered, ranging from events and workshops to publications and awards at the national or regional levels. Most of the initiatives were oriented towards international bodies and the public. All of the key areas of sustainable development and lines of action for the International Year were addressed, though most activities were focused on advocacy and awareness-raising.

33. Thirteen countries produced commemorative stamps and/or coins to promote the International Year. Spain issued both, while Bulgaria, Cambodia, Cyprus, Equatorial Guinea, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Tonga and Saint Pierre and Miquelon, France issued postage stamps, and Greece and San Marino issued commemorative coins. The coins were valued at €6 (Greece), €2 (San Marino) and €10 (Spain).

34. Governments worldwide supported a wide array of events related to sustainable tourism in 2017. A conference on sustainable tourism in small island developing States was held in Seychelles on 23 and 24 November, at which national and international delegates presented their research findings, project results and ideas related to sustainable tourism. The Japan Tourism Agency organized twin International Year symposiums in Okayama City and Mie, Japan, from 15 to 19 October, with a focus on enhancing the empowerment of women in tourism and mutual understanding between tourists and local communities. At a workshop in Athens on 2 March, on the theme "Destination Greece, 365 days — the role of sustainable tourism development", the Greek Ministry of Tourism presented its strategy and priorities to combat

seasonality. Mexico organized its first sustainable design competition for tourism to encourage the manufacture of sustainable tourism products based on the concept of the circular economy.

35. Several countries indicated that they had conducted research and issued publications in 2017 that addressed several key areas of the International Year, including the following: Germany published a study on development factor tourism and the economic contribution of tourism expenditures by Germans to developing and emerging countries, showing significant and positive impacts on gross domestic product, employment and public infrastructure; the Japan International Cooperation Agency conducted research on tourism development and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and developed an indicator toolkit for tourism development projects contributing to the latter; Brazil produced a guide on tourism and sustainability, aimed at disseminating responsible practices among tourism service providers; and Senegal initiated studies for the development of ecotourism in the regions of Tambacounda and Fatick, including recommendations and an action plan.

36. Some countries launched projects in the context of the International Year. Jamaica, for example, initiated a programme aimed at mainstreaming climate change and disaster risk management into tourism planning and offering capacity-building workshops for stakeholders. Zimbabwe provided tourism-related training and capacity-building to women, youth and small and medium-sized enterprises in the area around Victoria Falls.

37. Governments played a leading role in promoting the "Travel.Enjoy.Respect" campaign. Many countries disseminated the campaign, in most cases through social media, websites and events, but some, such as Andorra, Angola, Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Zimbabwe, also broadcast the campaign video on national or local television and radio channels. In addition, Seychelles held an inter-school public speaking competition on the campaign.

38. Besides promoting the campaign, numerous countries designed their own awareness-raising initiatives and programmes. For instance, Papua New Guinea implemented an awareness-raising programme and a debate competition in schools about the International Year, helping students to understand the importance and benefits of sustainable tourism development. The Spanish Balearic Islands launched a three-month campaign aimed at raising awareness among residents' and tourists of the importance of responsible water use.

39. In response to the UNWTO survey, Governments indicated that the International Year had improved understanding of tourism as a tool for development and for achieving the Goals, both within Governments and among national tourism stakeholders. As an example, Guatemala had seen a greater willingness on the part of tourism service providers to implement quality and sustainability strategies that, in addition to making operations more competitive, allowed for more sustainable and inclusive consumption practices and actions.

40. The International Year also triggered greater inclusion of tourism in development policies, plans or strategies, changes to or the creation of national tourism plans, and the establishment of specific tourism laws or regulations. For instance, the framework and guidelines of the International Year were used in the review or formulation of the national tourism plans or strategies of Brazil, El Salvador, Maldives, Namibia, Paraguay, the Philippines, Uganda, Uruguay and Zimbabwe.

B. Activities and initiatives of United Nations entities, international organizations and non-governmental organizations

41. A total 533 activities and initiatives to celebrate the International Year were implemented by United Nations entities, international organizations and NGOs. Most activities were centred on advocacy and awareness-raising among the general public and the private sector. The key area most addressed was that of cultural values, diversity and heritage

42. With the support of the Statistics Division of the United Nations, UNWTO launched an initiative on measuring sustainable tourism to develop an international statistical framework to support the integrated measurement of sustainable tourism at the global, national and subnational levels.

43. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) organized a series of conferences and workshops in the Dominican Republic, Mauritius, the Philippines and Saint Lucia, within the framework of the One Planet network (formerly the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns) and in the context of the International Climate Initiative project on transforming tourism value chains. In addition, in collaboration with the Centre for Responsible Travel, UNEP organized a forum in Washington, D.C., on World Tourism Day, 2017, with panel discussions on the five key areas of the International Year.

44. UNDP organized a conference on sustainable tourism for development in Izmir, Turkey, on 14 and 15 December 2017. UNDP and UNWTO also pooled their efforts to prepare one of the flagship publications entitled *Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals: Journey to 2030*.

45. The 2017 Global Aid for Trade Review conducted by the World Trade Organization (WTO) incorporated the focus of the International Year through sessions on such themes as "Tourism for development in least developed countries" and "Tourism and travel facilitation and connectivity" and through an International Year social event. The report entitled *Tourism for Sustainable Development in Least Developed Countries: Leveraging Resources for Sustainable Tourism with the Enhanced Integrated Framework*, published jointly by UNWTO, the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the Enhanced Integrated Framework, was launched on the same occasion.

46. ITC and UNWTO joined forces, bringing together a rich combination of expertise to partner countries in the design, management and implementation of national tourism export strategies. The resulting state-of-the-art methodology represents a joint ITC-UNWTO response to achieving Goal 8. The approach, which was laid out in a study entitled "ITC-UNWTO national tourism export strategies: reinforcing capacities to strengthen tourism value-chains and enhance local economic impact", was launched during the Aid for Trade Global Review 2017 and provides a blueprint for the development and competitiveness of tourism as an export sector.

47. Several United Nations entities, including the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), UNEP, WTO, ILO and UNDP, made significant contributions to the flagship publication *Tourism for Development* by providing comments and case studies.

48. UNCTAD launched its publication entitled *Economic Development in Africa Report 2017: Tourism for Transformative and Inclusive Growth*, at the UNWTO secretariat in Madrid.

49. The World Bank Group and the International Finance Corporation, issued a working paper entitled "20 reasons sustainable tourism counts for development", which focused on the wider benefits of sustainable tourism along the five key areas of the International Year. The Group also held an event in Washington, D.C. on the theme "Tourism knowledge exchange 2017: delivering on inclusion through tourism", which brought together tourism leaders and supported the official International Year event held in Montego Bay.

50. United Nations entities helped in the promotion of the International Year through their respective websites, social media channels and dedicated articles.

51. The World Travel and Tourism Council, an international organization representing major travel and tourism companies in the private sector, drafted a declaration for the International Year that was adopted by its membership, composed of 150 leading tourism companies, and that calls for the freedom to travel, policies for growth and responsible and sustainable tourism practices. In addition, the theme of the Council's annual Global Summit in 2017, "Transforming our world", was aligned with the International Year and focused on the contribution of tourism to sustainable development around the world.

52. The Global Travel Association Coalition (now Uniting Travel), which is composed of ICAO, Airports Council International, the Pacific Asia Travel Association, the World Economic Forum, the Cruise Lines International Association and the World Travel and Tourism Council, welcomed the International Year as an opportunity to underline the immense socioeconomic opportunities the sector brought to all societies.

53. The Network of European Regions for Competitive and Sustainable Tourism held events to discuss findings on the themes "Promoting European sustainable tourism for all" and "Smart tourism destinations' contribution for the planet and its people" over the course of 2017.

54. Throughout 2017, the International Tourism Partnership, a global platform that counts among its membership some of the world's leading hotel groups, such as Hilton, Marriott and Four Seasons, encouraged its members to see tourism as a sustainable development tool and advocated aligning all actions of the hotel sector with the Goals, including specific targets on youth employment and resource efficiency.

55. Hostelling International, a global network of youth hostel associations in more than 80 countries, actively promoted the International Year and used its Sleep for Peace initiative, supported by UNWTO, to celebrate mutual understanding, intercultural connections and peace during the week between the International Day of Peace and World Tourism Day (21–27 September 2017).

56. Positive Impact, a global NGO in the event industry, prepared a report entitled "*Telling the Story of the Power of Events during the United Nations Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development*" which included contributions from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and UNICEF. The report outlines how the event industry can contribute to achieving the Goals and serves as a framework for the global "Collaborate for Good" campaign in 2018.

C. Activities and initiatives of the private sector and other stakeholders

57. Around 600 initiatives from the private sector and other stakeholders were registered, most of them focused on advocacy and awareness-raising. The impact and outreach of the initiatives varied significantly, with activities ranging from large national conferences to a sustainable tour of a national park. Many stakeholders defined a strategy or action plan to implement their International Year initiatives.

Some designated sustainable tourism for development as a year-round theme for their tourism activities, while others planned events related to the International Year.

58. Booking.com released a global sustainable travel report, in which it highlighted the growing consumer demand to explore more sustainable travel options. The company also launched a "Booking booster" accelerator programme to identify, mentor and support innovative social enterprise start-ups in sustainable tourism through a €2 million fund, with a focus on preserving cultural heritage, protecting the environment and empowering local communities. In addition, it expanded the programme regionally with a series of compact "Booster labs" programmes to support early-stage start-ups in sustainable tourism and announced plans to set up a separate €2 million "Booking cares" fund to support non-profit projects and change-makers in sustainable tourism.

59. Airbnb partnered with UNWTO and engaged in activities to celebrate the International Year, for example, by promoting the "Travel.Enjoy.Respect" campaign through the company's communication channels and by launching a community tourism programme to support innovative projects.

60. Hilton initiated numerous activities addressing areas such as youth, community investment, environmental impact, inclusive growth and human rights. For instance, in Europe, more than 2,000 refugees were supported through programmes focusing on skills training and employment, including 42 of whom were hired. In addition, Hilton provided assistance to 250 young people with disabilities, who received skills training through local partnerships with 10 countries. As a follow-up action to the International Year, the company launched its 2030 global goals for sustainable travel, comprising 23 targets that were aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and were aimed at cutting the company's environmental footprint in half, while doubling its social impact by 2030 through responsible hospitality across the value chain.

61. Chemonics International, an international development company, launched a tourism sector development programme in Jordan on building economic sustainability through tourism, which was funded by the United States Agency for International Development. A variety of tourism development initiatives, conducted in line with the International Year were aimed at supporting tourism-driven economic growth and job creation.

62. Amadeus IT Group launched, in partnership with UNWTO and the Ministry of Tourism of Kenya, a programme for inclusive local economic growth through entrepreneurship and employment in travel and tourism, which served to empower women and youth in underprivileged communities through skills development and provided entrepreneurship opportunities in tourism.

63. Exemplary actions from small and medium-sized enterprises in the International Year framework included the food waste reduction project of Betterfly Tourism, consisting of a training programme, webinars and the creation of measurement tools and guidelines, and sustainable tourism workshops in Italy and Slovenia by Ecobnb.

64. A survey of private sector stakeholder activities related to the International Year revealed that the UNWTO activities and initiatives carried out within the context of the Year were considered very valuable and helped to impart a better understanding of tourism as a tool for development and for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Moreover, the International Year triggered changes in stakeholder business practices, leading to a more sustainable sector worldwide.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

65. The proclamation of the International Year successfully served to underscore the role of tourism in the achievement of the global development agenda and the Goals. With the participation of millions of people and thousands of activities worldwide, the observance of the International Year undoubtedly contributed to a wider awareness and recognition of the potential of tourism to spearhead economic growth, social inclusion, cultural and environmental preservation, and peace and mutual understanding.

66. Global celebrations held in the framework of the International Year highlighted the commitment of partners to working together to make the sector a catalyst for positive change. The activities initiated in 2017 brought the issue of sustainable tourism to prominence and will continue to serve as a road map for the global tourism community to further embrace sustainable practices and maximize the engagement of the travel and tourism sector in the 2030 Agenda.

67. The International Year sparked unprecedented commitments to action extending beyond 2017. Some specific actions are already under way, including the Tourism for Sustainable Development Goals platform (www.tourism4sdgs.org) developed by UNWTO with the support of the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs of Switzerland. The platform, which is aimed at encouraging policymakers, international organizations, academia, donors, companies and all tourism stakeholders to engage in implementation strategies for the Goals, was launched during the 2018 high-level political forum on sustainable development in New York on 18 July. The platform's three main features, "learn, share and act", serve as calls to action, conversation and collaboration in developing a sustainable tourism sector.

68. Other UNWTO initiatives include the establishment of two special ambassador programmes, for tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals and for responsible travel, as a follow-up to the International Year special ambassadors programme. The programmes engage high-level and influential personalities from around the world to advocate a responsible and sustainable tourism sector. In addition, the campaign entitled "Travel.Enjoy.Respect" will continue to call on responsible travellers to contribute towards the Goals.

69. Further efforts are needed, however, to maintain and capitalize upon the significant momentum generated during the International Year. The General Assembly may therefore wish to consider the following recommendations:

(a) To increase awareness of the contribution of tourism to the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals and encourage the full integration of tourism into national, regional and global development agendas, as well as in development cooperation policies;

(b) To engage with the United Nations system and its diverse entities to adopt a coordinated approach with UNWTO when developing sustainable tourism, recognizing that the cross-cutting nature of the tourism sector provides the opportunity for the system to deliver as one with regard to tourism and the 2030 Agenda;

(c) To encourage relevant changes in policies, business practices and consumer behaviour, with a view to further deepening the impact of tourism on sustainable development, to increase financial support for tourism development and to monitor sectoral changes in respect of the 2030 Agenda;

(d) **To support public-private partnerships in tourism that create income-generating opportunities and inclusive green and blue growth and that finance infrastructure and technology that improve resource efficiency, mitigate climate change and help to decouple economic growth from resource use and environmental degradation.**